

ABOUT VISUAL ARTISTS

Andrea Brew: “Artist*Wilderness*Connection” Through September at Walking Man Gallery in Whitefish, with a reception 6-9 p.m. Sept. 6

Artist’s website: www.facebook.com/andrea.h.brew

Whitefish artist Andrea Brew says she has always been happiest

“out in the wilderness, where I spend much of my time and where I find inspiration.”

She was selected to participate in this year’s Artist*Wilderness*Connection Program, an artist-in-residence project that connects artists and local communities with public lands in Northwest Montana. The project was launched

in 2004 and continues to be supported by the Hockaday Museum of Art in Kalispell, the Bob Marshall Wilderness Foundation, the Flathead National Forest and the Swan Ecosystem Center.

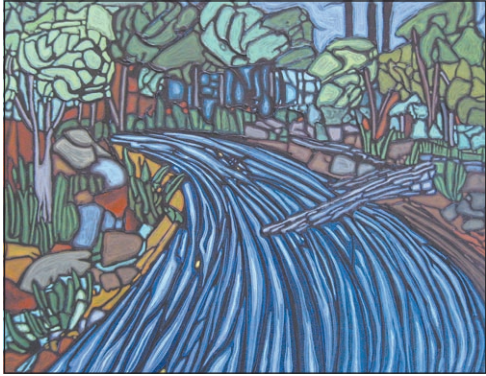
As one of three artists chosen to participate, Brew had her gear and artist’s materials packed by horse into a remote Forest Service cabin in the Bob Marshall Wilderness. “I spent 11 days studying my surroundings, hiking, sketching, painting, reading and writing,” she says. “I paint with acrylic on canvas or wood and enjoy depicting the natural world in surprising ways.”

The exhibit in Whitefish shares the results of that adventure.

In her most recent works, Brew has been experimenting with pattern and color by building layers of color on a textured black under-painting. “This process involves a good balance of control and looseness, intention and whimsy,” says the artist.

She paints negative spaces, so that shapes “grow more organically and unpredictably out of the dark.”

Brew moved to Montana in 1992, and has shown her work in Whitefish and Missoula, where she lived from 2001-2009. Her paintings were included in the 2009 Montana Triennial, hosted by the Missoula Art Museum, and also in the 2011 MAM art auction. She now lives in Whitefish, where her work is represented by Walking Man Gallery.



“Creek at Dusk” by Andrea Brew

Jeremy Lurgio: “Lost and Found Montana” Through Oct. 30 at Rocky Mountain School of Photography Gallery in Missoula

Artist’s website: www.lostandfoundmontana.com

Jeremy Lurgio is a freelance photographer and an associate professor of journalism and multimedia at The University of Montana School of Journalism. His new project, “Lost and Found Montana,” documents the story of 18 Montana towns in words, photographs, video and audio.



“Ross Fork” by Jeremy Lurgio

In 2000, the Montana Department of Transportation’s new highway map sealed the fate of 18 towns: nine communities would remain and nine would disappear. This exhibit features 36 photographs of these 18 towns, while examining the issue of depopulation in the Great Plains.

These are not ghost stories, but stories of towns clinging to existence like tumbleweed to a barbed wire fence – stories of farming, railroad, mining and mountain towns. The destiny of each community provides a lens into the changing rural West and the fragility of place.

Lurgio traveled more than 7,000 miles across Montana to photograph and report these stories. He’s not interested in just history, but in the people who keep these places alive.

“I am excited to tell the stories of towns like Horton,” Lurgio said. “If the last man in Horton hadn’t been struck by a train in 1999, Horton may not have vanished from the Montana map. His name was Frank Hartman. He had a story and his son knows it.”

Beyond photographs, the project strives to reach audiences through an interactive website and a multimedia experience in the gallery. Each set of photographs has an audio component, which viewers access via a QR code using their smartphone or tablet. The website features additional multi-media projects, as well as photos, panoramas and stories.

Kathleen Herlihy-Paoli: “Seven from Missoula” Through Nov. 16 in the Emerson Center’s Jessie Wilber Gallery and Lobby in Bozeman, with receptions 6-8 p.m. Sept. 14 & Oct. 12

Kathleen Herlihy-Paoli’s photorealistic oil paintings are part of “Seven from Missoula,” on display at the Emerson Center for the Arts and Culture. The invitational two-venue show features contemporary artworks by well-known and emerging Missoula artists known locally as the “Saltmine” artists. Members include Bev Beck Glueckert, Stephen Glueckert, Peter Keefer, Cathryn Mallory, Karen Rice and Edgar Smith.

The newest member of the group is Herlihy-Paoli, a realist painter

who is showing oil paintings and an interactive wall sculpture. The artist earned her bachelor’s in studio arts from Skidmore College in upstate New York, with post-degree studies at Pratt Institute in Brooklyn and in lithography at Pratt Manhattan Center.

She moved to Montana in 1995 with her husband, John Paoli, who is from Great Falls. Her work has been featured in Montana at the Dana Gallery and the Missoula Art Museum.

“I am interested in color, pattern and texture, and the details that define an object, or make up part of that object,” writes Herlihy-Paoli.

Her current work consists of cropped and enlarged compositions that explore texture, light and color. She’s been approaching her paintings as studies “in pattern and texture, rather than the compositional landscape focus that I had previously sought for inspiration.”

The artist says her influences include “George Seurat’s charcoal drawings, for both their clarity and their mystery; Mark Rothko and Joseph Alber’s for their finely honed sense of color; and Georgia O’Keefe for her scope of vision and attention to detail.”

The content-driven works of “Seven from Missoula” are a springboard for the Emerson’s “Schools in the Gallery” educational program. Interactive docent-led tours of the exhibit are available, followed by an optional art activity. For details, visit www.theemerson.org.



“Influence” by Kathleen Herlihy-Paoli

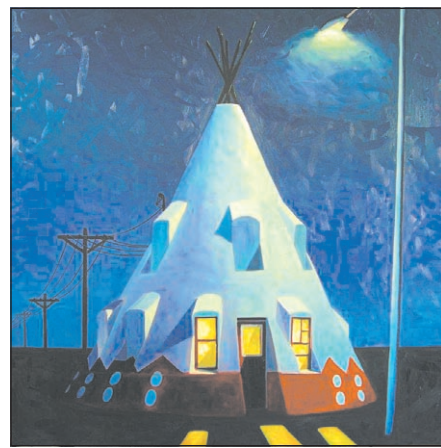
Rob Akey: “Observation, Memory and Invention: Western Art and Imagery Reconsidered”

Sept. 6-Nov. 3 at the Hockaday Center for the Arts in Kalispell, with a reception 5-7 p.m. Sept. 13

Artist’s website: www.RobAkey.com

With his new exhibit, Whitefish artist Rob Akey looks at traditional western iconography in a current, honest and unblinking way. The paintings are sometimes poignant, and sometimes sardonic.

Subjects range from expired-horse-as-lunch, a stucco tipi, and traditional native portraiture. According to the artist, this “visual commentary pokes fun at the increasingly circus-like business of western art. It is some way a reminder of the ‘dark side’ of the West that was and that still exists today, just in a different form.”



“Enlightenment” by Rob Akey

Akey was born in Whitefish, and displayed an early propensity for drawing and painting. After a brief stint in California, his family moved to Great Falls, and lived in the neighborhood near Charlie Russell’s home and studio. “I am a huge fan of Russell’s work, but it’s not the cowboys and Indians that interest me,” he says. The famed artist, he noticed, was “a superb colorist with a knack for capturing atmosphere.”

Akey attended Montana State University, was an apprentice and student with contemporary impressionist painter Bob McKinney, and eventually earned a degree in design and illustration from Minneapolis College of Art and Design. He became a designer with Tonka Toys and left the company nine years later as director of creative services. He held a similar post with a Colorado toy and hobby company before returning to Montana with his family in 1993.

Akey now paints full-time from his studio in Whitefish, is an adjunct painting professor, and participates regularly in invitational, juried and plein air painting events throughout the country. His work is displayed in galleries throughout Montana, and appears in private, public and corporate collections across the U.S.

His representational, yet emotional paintings convey his joy in Montana’s wildlife and terrain. He’s inspired, he says, by American Impressionists, whose “painterly technique is neither contrived nor clever.”

Art Duff: “Corners of My Mind”

Through October at Artitudes Gallery in Havre, with a reception 6-8 p.m. Sept. 14

Montana artist Art Duff has been drawing and painting most of his life. “When I was 18 I was told that being able to draw and paint was OK when I was a kid, but now I needed to get a real job or profession that I could support myself with, which I did,” he says.

He continued to draw, and eventually took classes in stained glass, watercolor and metal-smithing. But it was watercolors that inspired him the most. “I went to the teacher I had and explained that I wanted to learn how to paint everything – rocks, trees, water, people, faces any and everything that I saw,” he says.

He eventually studied with Oregon artist Craig Lasha. “With Craig’s subtle influence and guidance I learned that I have been an artist my whole life ... I have come to realize through the works of Eric Slone and Andrew Wyeth and the words of Robert Henri that I need to paint what I find on the back roads of the place where I find myself.”

Duff has since moved to Montana, where he continues to travel the back roads “and paint what I experience.”



“Celestial Paramecium” by Art Duff



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Send your submissions for About Visual Arts

With About Visual Arts, *State of the Arts* continues to profile living Montana artists (no students, please), whose work is the focus of a current exhibit (on display during some portion of the two months covered by the current issue of *State of the Arts*).

Submissions must include:

- A digital image of the artist’s work, with title of the piece;
- A brief bio and description of the artist’s work (up to 300 words);
- Dates and title of exhibit;
- The gallery or museum name, town and phone number.

MAC will select submissions that reflect a cross-section of gender, geography, styles and ethnicity, and are from a mix of public and private galleries and museums.

Deadline for submissions for the November/December issue is Oct. 1. Please send submissions to writus@livelytimes.com with About Visual Arts in the subject line.